REMARKS

Applicant has amended Claim 1 to reflect the following feature. As discussed by the Applicant on, for example, page 2, lines 1 through 22, the spring force from the compression coil springs tends to warp the holder member containing the springs. This spring force is plainly taught by the cited Kazama reference (USP 6,556,033), which discloses that the coil springs are installed in a compressed state as set forth in Col. 3, lines 36-41. As technology advances, the number of contacts (and hence coil springs) increases such that a Kazama probe will suffer from the cumulative stress introduced by so many coil springs.

In sharp contrast, Applicant has provided a contact probe having a holder member in which the coil springs are not compressed in a rest state. Thus, even with many points to be tested (and corresponding coil springs), there are no spring forces exerted onto the holder member. As discussed, for example, on page 9, line 6 by the Applicant, this lack of stress on each spring means that each spring extends its natural (uncompressed) length when the contacts are not being used for testing. Claim 1 has been amended to reflect this advantageous feature. For example, the coil springs are limited to have "a natural length in an uncompressed state." Furthermore, the coil springs are installed in each hold hole "such that each electroconductive coil spring extends by its natural length under a rest condition of said contact probe." No new matter is added, the support being as just discussed.

The rejection of the pending claims as being obvious over Kazama in view of the Tarzwell reference (USP 6,034,532) is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, Kazama teaches that the springs are installed in a compressed state. Thus, these springs are not extending their natural length when the Kazama probe is in a rest state. The Tarzwell reference adds nothing further. Instead, the stress the Tarzwell reference was addressing was the internal stress (which Tarzwell denoted as "built-in) in each coil spring resulting from their manufacture. Col. 3, lines 1-13. To produce a conventional

coil spring, wire is generally wound around a mandrel. Because the wire was originally not in that wound state, internal stresses will naturally result from its deformation about the mandrel. But Applicants' coil springs may have such internal stresses or could be made as discussed in Tarzwell (a helix cut from a tube). Such internal stresses are irrelevant to whether the coil springs are installed such that they extend their natural length when the probe is in a rest state. Indeed, Tarzwell is entirely silent regarding whether its springs extend by their natural length when the probe is in its rest state. Accordingly, claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-9 are patentable over the cited prior art.

Claim 10 has been amended analogously as discussed with regard to claim 1. Thus, claim 10 and its dependent claims 11-19 are also allowable over the cited prior art.

In addition, claim 16 has been amended to address some minor typographical errors.

CONCLUSION

The applicant respectfully requests the examiner to withdraw the rejections of the claims in this application, and to issue a notice of allowance for all pending claims. If the examiner has any questions, he is requested to call the attorney for Applicant at (949)-752-7040.

Certification of Facsimile Transmission
I hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on the date shown below.

Jonathan W. Hallman — July 10, 2006 (Date of Signature)

Respectfully submitted,

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